

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated December 5, 2007, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on March 5, 2008. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Claims 1-45 remain pending in the application and are shown above. Claims 1-9, 12-20, 25-27, 30-34, 36, 38 and 40-45 are rejected. Claims 10, 11, 21-24, 28, 29, 35 and 37 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Reconsideration of the rejected claims is requested for reasons presented below.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 12, 25, 26, 30, 38, 40 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Krupyshev* (U.S. Patent No. 6,944,517). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Applicant respectfully submits that these rejections are not based on prior art. *Krupyshev* has a date of patent of September 13, 2005, a date of first publication of January 6, 2005, and a filing date of July 3, 2003. The present application has a filing date of March 16, 2004. Further, the present application properly claims benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) to Provisional Application No. 60/469,968, filed on May 12, 2003. Applicant submits that all claims of the present application are fully supported under the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112 by the provisional application. Therefore, the effective filing date of the present application is May 12, 2003, which predates the filing date of *Krupyshev*. Applicant requests withdrawal of these rejections.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3, 7-9, 27, 31, 36, 42-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Krupyshev* (U.S. Patent No. 6,944,517), in view of *Storm et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,746,237). Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as

being unpatentable over *Krupyshev* (U.S. Patent No. 6,944,517), in view of *Pryor* (U.S. Patent No. 6,314,631). Claims 15-20 and 32-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Krupyshev* (U.S. Patent No. 6,944,917) in view of *Brown et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,689,519). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

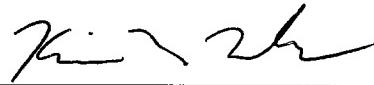
Applicant submits that these rejections are not based on prior art. The deficiency of *Krupyshev* was discussed previously with regard to the 35 U.S.C. 102 rejections. Applicant submits that *Storm et al.*, *Pryor*, and *Brown et al.* do not correct this deficiency. Applicant requests withdrawal of these rejections.

In conclusion, the references cited by the Examiner, alone or in combination, do not teach, show, or suggest the invention as claimed.

The secondary references made of record are noted. However, it is believed that the secondary references are no more pertinent to the Applicant's disclosure than the primary references cited in the office action. Therefore, Applicant believes that a detailed discussion of the secondary references is not necessary for a full and complete response to this office action.

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



Keith M. Tackett
Registration No. 32,008
PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
3040 Post Oak Blvd. Suite 1500
Houston, TX 77056
Telephone: (713) 623-4844
Facsimile: (713) 623-4846
Attorney for Applicant(s)